

Speak up & be heard

CONSUMER REGISTER lists summaries of major consumer proposals before Federal agencies. If you wish to submit written comments, include your name & address, state the name & *Federal Register* citation of the proposal on which you are commenting and explain your views briefly & clearly.

Moving companies

July 25 is deadline for comments on Interstate Commerce Commission's (ICC) proposals aimed at reducing consumer problems related to household movers.

Some common consumer problems are

- Late pickup or delivery of household goods;
- Inaccurate estimates;
- Loss & damage of the transported household goods.

ICC proposes to require movers to give consumers information in standard form that would allow consumers to compare the performances of different carriers. Companies would be required to provide information on

- Number of their shipments on which there was a 10% or greater overestimate or underestimate of charges;
- Number of shipments picked up or delivered later than specified in the order for service;
- Number of shipments on which a \$50 or greater claim for loss or damages was filed;
- Average length of time to settle claims for loss or damage.

ICC would require that these service records be filed quarterly with ICC's Bureau of Operations & each of its regional offices.

ICC's proposal would require written cost estimates at the consumer's request. It would also standardize the weight factor used in calculating shipping estimates.

ICC rejected suggestions that it propose regulations to eliminate commission payments to estimators & to impose monetary penalties for late pickup or delivery.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 13, page 15526; Aug. 2, 1972, page 15466. CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 1, 1972. CONSUMER NEWS: Nov. 1, 1972. Send comments to Secretary, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, DC 20423.

Lard

Aug. 17 is deadline for comments on Agriculture Dept.'s proposal to modify its standard for some of the ingredients that can be used in lard (fat rendered from fatty tissues of hogs) & to eliminate a separate standard for production of rendered pork fat (fat rendered from other than fatty tissues of hogs).

Agriculture says rendered pork fat, which is similar to lard in chemical & nutritional composition, is not the important commodity that it once was. It says there are no longer economic advantages for processors to prepare both lard & rendered pork fat.

Under the proposal, Agriculture would permit the use of cured or cooked pork tissues or both in the preparation of lard as well as fat rendered from bones. In the past, use of cooked or cured tissues created rancidity problems, but Agriculture reports that changes in processing have eliminated these problems.

The proposal also would establish quality standards for grading the new lard.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 13, page 15519. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250.

Feminine deodorant sprays

Aug. 20 is deadline for comments on Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) proposal to require special warning labels on feminine deodorant sprays.

FDA has received reports from consumers & physicians that these sprays cause adverse reactions, such as itching, burning & infections.

Under the proposal, labels of feminine deodorant sprays have to bear the following warning:

"CAUTION: For external use only. Spray at least 8 inches from skin. Use sparingly and not more than once daily to avoid irritation. Do not use this product with a sanitary napkin. Do not apply to broken, irritated, or itching skin. Persistent or unusual odor may indicate the presence of a condition for which a physician should be consulted. If a rash, irritation, unusual vaginal discharge, or discomfort develops, discontinue use immediately and consult physician."

In addition to requiring warning labels, the proposal would prohibit manufacturers from describing their products as "hygienic" or otherwise medically useful. FDA says the sprays do not serve any known useful hygienic purpose.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 21, page 16236. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

Pizza

Aug. 31 is deadline for comments on Agriculture Dept.'s proposal to change the standards for cheese & meat content of pizzas produced in food processing plants.

The proposal, if adopted, would

- Require that pizzas contain at least 12% cheese (current regulations set no minimum requirement for cheese);
- Permit raw as well as cooked meat in "pizza with meat" (current regulations specify that these pizzas shall contain only cooked meat);
- Continue the requirement that pizzas with meat contain at least 15% meat (cooked or raw) based on measurement of raw meat.

By permitting the use of raw as well as cooked meat in pizza, Agriculture says consumers should have a wider selection of products from which to choose.

The proposed standards would not apply to pizzas

made & baked in local restaurants. However, both frozen & refrigerated pizzas prepared under state or Federal inspection would be included in the regulation.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 22, page 16363. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250.

Frozen cherry pie

Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has adopted standards, effective Dec. 31, for frozen cherry pies.

This is the first time a standard has had the effect of requiring a minimum amount of cherries in a pie: not less than 25% of the weight of the pie. If there is less than the minimum amount of cherries, manufacturers will not be permitted to use the term "frozen cherry pie."

Before this regulation, each manufacturer could decide how many cherries to put in its frozen pie designated as cherry.

Some other requirements of the new regulation:

- Not more than 15% of the cherries can be blemished;
- Labeling statements must be used when the quality of the product is substandard (for example, "Below standard in quality—too few cherries" or "Below standard in quality—blemished cherries");
- Misleading pictures of pies brimming with cherries are banned from the pie labels;

- Optional ingredients (such as lemon juice, sugar & honey) used in the pies must be declared on the label.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 13, page 15503; Feb. 23, 1971.

X-rays

Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has extended the effective date of its new radiation protection standards for diagnostic x-ray machines from Aug. 15, 1973, to Aug. 1, 1974.

X-ray equipment manufacturers & National Electrical Manufacturers Association requested the extension early this year. FDA then sent letters to about 100 equipment manufacturers, manufacturers' associations, public & professional groups & others asking for justification for an extension of the effective date.

Manufacturers replied they needed more time to

- Redesign equipment to comply with the standard;
- Obtain components & parts from suppliers;
- Develop instructions & manuals for users & assemblers;

- Train assemblers;
- Develop testing programs to check quality control.

FDA stressed that no further extensions will be granted & urged manufacturers to provide equipment that meets the standard in advance of the new effective date wherever possible.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 12, page 15444; Aug. 15, 1972, page 16461. *CONSUMER REGISTER*: Sept. 15, 1972.

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